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is arrived at, by all of us saying what we think will be expected of us. Were every one to say honestly what he thinks about this picture, how many would find "sublimity" in this Virgin's face? There is nothing there but a total lack of expression or sentiment of any kind. The reader will remember what Thackeray said about "La Belle Jardinière": "I hate those simpering Madonnas. I declare that the Jardinière is a puking, smirking Miss with nothing heavenly about her." This Virgin is nothing so positive as that—she is vapidly in person. And when we read of "the Child with sparkling joy and freshness in his eyes, and the freedom of childhood in a head of glorious hair tangled, but tossing every way," we wish the writer joy of his power to see what is not to be seen, and to become so enthusiastic over it. A true knowledge and a lasting enjoyment of art do not come this way. A healthy criticism tries to see things as they really are.

CLARENCE COOK.

ART IN PHILADELPHIA.

EXHIBITIONS OF THE SOCIETY OF ARTISTS AND THE SOCIETY OF ETCHERS.

THE Philadelphia Society of Artists is now holding its fourth annual exhibition at its galleries in Chestnut Street. This society started the fashion of holding autumn and winter exhibitions in Philadelphia—that is to say, exhibitions of original works contributed by the artists themselves—and in that and other particulars it has done much to advance art interests. The majority of its members are young and energetic men who are not only capable of making an attractive and varied display of their own works, but who are in sympathetic relations with the younger men of New York and other cities, and are consequently able to command, for their exhibitions, the best contemporary performances. The exhibition now in progress is the best that has thus far been held under the auspices of the society. It contains some canvases which can really be called important, while a very high average of excellence has been achieved. Few of the works can fairly be said to be so poor as to be unworthy of respectful critical consideration, while a large majority of them are marked by positive qualities of superiority.

As many of their pictures have but recently been shown in New York and Brooklyn, and some of the most important among them, such as Mr. Hovenden's "Elaine" and his very admirable study of an old negro, Mr. Weir's "Flowers," and Percy Moran's "Studio," have already been mentioned in THE ART AMATEUR, such a detailed notice of the collection, as would be called for under other circumstances is scarcely necessary. The largest canvases devoted to figure subjects, other than Mr. Hovenden's picture above referred to, are F. D. Millet's portrait of Lawrence Barrett in the character of "Cassius," Fred James's study of a Canadian Indian fisher-girl, and Constant Mayer's full-length study of a boy which he entitles "The Truant's Remorse," as if a truant ever felt remorse except when he had a certainty of an interview with Dr. Birch fairly in prospect. The title of Mr. Mayer's work cannot be considered remarkably happy, but the picture is one of the best, by this artist, that has ever been shown in Philadelphia. Mr. James's fisher-girl is not handsome, but the picture has merit. And so has Mr. Millet's portrait of Barrett, although the most important part of it—the face—is unfortunately the least meritorious part. It is singular that an artist, who can paint drapery and accessories as well as they have been painted in this instance, cannot paint the human face divine without making it call to mind one of those famous Herald war-maps. Another goodly sized canvas that is entitled to particular notice, because of its merits, is E. H. Blashfield's "Music." This represents a damsel with a dulcimer, and a stretch of marble wall with a bit of foliage beyond and other accessories. The composition is very simple, and while it cannot be said that the picture expresses any particular idea, musical or otherwise, it is, nevertheless, an uncommonly pleasing work—a good deal more pleasing both as regards matter and manner than Mr. Blashfield's Roman pictures exhibited a few seasons ago. More interesting than any of these large canvases are C. Y. Turner's "Afternoon Tea," and "The Days that are no More." The latter, a representation of a widow and her orphaned boy leaving a graveyard, is a thoroughly charming work. It strikes a chord of sentiment without

twanging it. Among the other figure studies worthy of note, on account of their superior qualities, are a representation of a couple of young flower merchants arranging their wares for market by Leon Delachaux, which is entitled, "For who [!] are These?" a very refined little representation of a young girl in classical costume by Miss Mary K. Trotter, entitled, "Fastening the Girdle;" bright, sketchy little studies for which very pretty girls have posed as models, by Leon and Percy Moran; "Watching at the Gate"—the title of which is or ought to be sufficiently descriptive—by W. H. Lippincott, and a couple of very attractive pictures—"Blackberrying," and "First at the Tryst"—by C. Morgan McIlhenney, in which both figures and landscapes are painted with a great deal of refinement. Gilbert Gaul has two goodly sized canvases devoted to warlike themes, one entitled "Silenced," which shows the dead visited by the glimpses of the moon, and the other "Soldiers on a Picket Station," not failing to have a very good time of it in spite of the cold weather. These have much merit, but they are scarcely as attractive either in matter and manner as less ambitious performances of the same artist which have figured in recent exhibitions.

As is usual in American exhibitions the landscapes are in the majority, and average better as regards quality than do the figure pieces. The most showy landscapes are those of W. L. Picknell, who contributes four canvases. All of them are superior works—one entitled "Crossing the Bar," representing a brawny and sun-burned fisherman fastening his boat, being the most effective if not the most meritorious—although they seem to indicate that Mr. Picknell is master of but one scheme of color. Prosper L. Senat, who appears to have been under Mr. Picknell's influence of late—and not to his disadvantage—exhibits several representations of scenery in the neighborhood of Campobello. The largest, and all things being considered, the best of Mr. Senat's works is entitled "Summertime in the Land of Weirs," a picture which is a delight if only for the sake of its limpid and breathable atmosphere. It will not do, however, to judge a picture by its size; otherwise but scant justice would be done to such a lovely work as the "Gray Autumn," of J. Francis Murphy. This is not only the best of several pictures contributed by Mr. Murphy to the exhibition, but it is the best landscape by any hand in the exhibition. There is just a suggestion of Corot, which would seem to indicate that Mr. Murphy has intelligently studied the works of that master, while it has in it that which does not belong to any man except the painter of it. Other landscapes which are marked by positive qualities of excellence, have been contributed by M. F. H. De Haas, Thomas B. Craig, H. Bolton Jones, W. Sartain, James B. Sword, Bruce Crane, W. P. W. Dana, Clifford P. Grayson, H. R. Poore, Peter Moran, Arthur Quartley, and others.

While the Philadelphia Society of Artists is holding its fourth annual exhibition at its galleries in Chestnut Street, the Philadelphia Society of Etchers is making its first venture in a similar way at the Academy of the Fine Arts. This exhibition is limited to the works of contemporary etchers—a limitation which is to be regretted for a number of reasons, and particularly because such a display of the best works of the best etchers of all ages and all schools as could have been made would certainly have assisted in interesting the general public in an art concerning which there are many popular misunderstandings. The collection, however, is a very interesting one as it stands, and it is an exceedingly adequate representation of the accomplishments of the modern etchers. Contributions have been received direct from many prominent American and European practitioners with the needle and the acid, while the rich collections of James L. Claghorn and others have been freely drawn upon. The English School of Etching is represented by notable works by Seymour Haden, Whistler, Wilfred Ball, and other artists of repute; while the works of continental masters bear all or nearly all the names of noted artist etchers. Without disparagement to the admirable qualities of the English works, it must be said that an adequate understanding of the resources of the etching process can only be obtained by an examination of the performances of the French, Spanish, and Italian artists. Not only this, but these continental works, whether they be but slight scratches on the copper or elaborate light and shade studies, seem to tell something not merely about the importance of an artist having a clear understanding with regard to what he intends to do before he begins, but

about his having a distinct understanding about what had best be done. These works range from such rapid but wonderfully effective sketches as Felix Buhot's representations of rainy and sunny days in Paris, and A. Piccinni's brilliant little sketches of a group at a theatre, a group in church, and so on, to such elaborate performances as C. E. Jacque's "Sheep in Stable"—a treatment of the subject as exhaustive in its way as a painting by the artist would be—and C. Maccari's "Good Samaritan," in which the tones range from the pure white of the flame of a lantern to the intensest black, or such elaborate performances in rivalry of burin work as P. Rajon's portraits of Cardinal Newman and Charles Darwin. The collection also contains numerous examples from the hands of such celebrated painters as Bastien-Lepage, Berne-Bellecour, L. Bonnat, Benjamin Constant, C. F. Daubigny, E. Detaille, Fortuny, Gérôme, Meissonier, Millet, and Rousseau.

The American exhibit is unexpectedly good and contains a considerable number of highly meritorious plates. Stephen Parrish is the most ambitious among the American etchers and exhibits several very large plates, which are devoted mainly to subjects selected on the New England coast. These are apt to be somewhat scattered in composition, and the artist has not always been successful in achieving tone harmonies, but when all allowances for shortcomings are made there is much in them that commands hearty admiration. Joseph Pennell is the one among the American etchers who appears to have the greatest feeling for the picturesque, and many of his plates are not only entitled to great praise for the simplicity and directness of their execution, but for the skill with which much has been made of very commonplace objects. Among the other American artists, who have contributed noteworthy works, may be mentioned A. F. Bellows, F. S. Church, Henry Farrer, Gerome Ferris, Stephen J. Ferris, John Gaugengigl, R. Swain Gifford, Mrs. Emily Moran, Mrs. M. Nimmo Moran, Thomas Moran, Peter Moran, James Simpson, James D. Smillie, C. A. Vanderhoof, and Kruseman Van Elten. This exhibition is well worthy of a visit from all who are at all interested in the art of etching, or who want to be informed with regard to its capabilities.

SIGMA.

FANS AND FAN PAINTING.

CONCLUSION.

BUT, after all, the legitimate and indeed the only perfectly beautiful fan is that with a vellum or swan's skin or goose skin mount. It is most interesting on account of the importance of the paintings that can be executed upon these materials, which are by far the most durable of any used for the purpose. Swan's skin and goose skin have a grain which gives the right texture for flesh, and it does not shrink in mounting. But it is imported and not easy to obtain. Vellum may be obtained from your bookbinder. With this material there is nothing to hinder the minutest, the most highly finished, the most perfectly executed work. A vellum fan is often stippled with as much labor and finish as an ivory miniature. Any subject, no matter how complicated, can be attempted. As this kind of fan, however, ought to last for one or two hundred years, it is wise to choose a subject that is either mythological or taken from the works of a great master. A subject of the present period would probably have no interest, nor any value whatever, a few generations hence.

A moderately soft lead pencil is used for drawing on vellum. The outline should be done very delicately, and the false marks may be effaced, without much rubbing, with some stale bread crumb. It is better, if you transfer, to use the tracing paper with black lead on the back, rather than the blue or red papers. Care must be taken not to lean on the ivory tracing point while transferring. It would then make an indented mark in the vellum, and interfere with the painting. Some pretty medallions are done upon vellum. In general the centre one is from 2½ to 3½ inches high, by 4 or 4½ inches in width. The medallions on each side of this one are a great deal smaller. In the middle one there is a subject, and in the other two either monograms, trophies, or emblems. These paintings are often done in pink or blue monochrome, or as "grisailles," to make the fans match with the ladies' dresses.

"Monochrome," as the reader probably knows, is